SPECIAL SERVICE CLUB

the RaRa Rag

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December RARA Meeting "Hurricanes"

by Bill Kasperkoski, WB2SXY
Vice-President, RARA

We've all seen the pictures of the devastation caused by hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma. We've all listened to the reports and monitored the hurricane frequencies. We've all been affected or know someone affected by hurricanes. We have an opportunity now to understand through the eyes of one of our own, Peter Fournia, W2SKY, who just spent three weeks in the hurricane aftermath area as a Red Cross Volunteer.

Peter will help us understand the planning, the wreckage, the devastation and the determination of some of the people right in the thick of the action.

RARA General Membership Meeting, Friday night, December 2, 2005, meeting starts promptly at 7:30PM, Henrietta Fire Company #1, 3129 E. Henrietta Road, corner of Lehigh Station Road, Henrietta.

K2CAN-3 Xrouter Update

By Mark Harloff, K2CAN

All ports at the K2CAN-3 XRouter Node as well as the K2CAN FlexDigi are back online. I am having a minor problem with the link between these two services and the K2CAN-2 AR Cluster, but hope to have that resolved soon.

Access to all services can be found via the Web at http://k2can.net

RaRa MEETING
December 2, 2005
7:30 P.M.
Henrietta Fire Hall #1
3129 East Henrietta Road
Hurricanes
By Peter Fournia, W2SKY

Empire State Games in Rochester Summer 2006

By Keith Freeberg, N2BEL
RARA Public Service Coordinator

The ESG will be gracing Rochester area college campuses July 26 thru 30, 2006, and we need your help for the "Games" to be successful. The athletic venues do not start unless there is Amateur Radio coverage available to summon medical help if needed!

The Summer Games feature more than 5,000 athletes, representing six regions from across the state, participating in 25 different Olympic-style sports. The athletes compete in either the scholastic, open or masters division. The five-day event normally generates an economic impact of upwards of $8 million for the local economy and attracts more than 15,000 visitors from around the state.

On Wednesday evening (approximately 7:30), opening day of the games, Amateur Radio Operators will march onto the field and be announced just like the players and coaches. Each ham that signs up will receive a hat, shirt and all venues ID badge that you should wear proudly that evening.

If all the Ham Volunteers show up (and I hope you do) there will be a hundred or more of us in green hats and shirts. Marching on to the field when announced will help give Amateur Radio, and you, the recognition you deserve. City, county and state officials will be in attendance so a great outpouring of area Hams will not go un-noticed.

Registration for the Empire State Games is quick and easy. Serving at the Summer Games is even easier. All you need is an HT and couple spare hours. Three ways to register; contact Keith Freeberg @ 254-0722, download a form from www.RochesterHam.org or register at any RARA meeting.

Have questions? Call Keith or send him an e-mail at n2bel@arrl.net

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The Prez Sez

By Dick Goslee, KG2I
President, RARA

If you weren't there for the 46th Annual Auction you sure missed a good time. With over 120 people in attendance we managed to auction off 18 full length tables of material and still finish at 11:00PM. I would like to thank everyone who was there for your cooperation as it made the evening go very smoothly. I would especially like to thank the other members of the "Auction Team" for their help in making this another successful event for RARA. Ed Gable, Irv Goodman, Greg Michels, George Masny and Bill Kasperkoski you did a heck of a job. I would also like to thank the RAPS group for their donations of items to be sold with all the money going to the Scholarship Fund. In addition a number of members and families also donated items with all the proceeds going to RARA. THANK YOU.

The next meeting of RARA will be a new one for us. It will be the first December meeting in a long time that will be held at the Henrietta Fire Company #1. Normally the December meeting was a joint meeting at Kodak Park. However that meeting place is no longer available during the evening hours. The Vice-President is trying to put together a joint meeting for the Spring with not only the Kodak group but also the other Ham organizations in the area. Look for more details in the near future.

As you saw in the results in the last issue of the RAG our VE Testing Team is back in operation. Raj Dewan, N2RD and his group are giving tests the 3rd Saturday of each month at RIT starting at 10:00AM. Look for the ad in each issue of the RAG for all the details. If you have any questions you can contact Raj for additional information. His phone number and e-mail are shown in the ad.

I hope you all have a good Thanksgiving and for those of you that are off to the woods to go deer hunting, please be careful and hunt safely. Always wear a lot of orange clothing so you can be seen by other hunters. I hope you get the big buck you are looking for. I hope I get one too.

January Rag Deadline
December 9, 2005

Rochester Hamfest
June 2-3-4, 2006

RaRa Rag 20 Years Ago, December 1985

By Ed Gable, K2MP
RARA Historian

Many changes were offered to RaRa members with a change in venue and a change in programming for this meeting. The meeting place was the annual trek to Kodak Park where the *Kodak Park ARC* hosted the event. Hosting the meeting was the *Rochester DX Association* with a program introducing the RDXA and promoting DX'ing and contesting. RaRa President and RaRa Rag Editor Ron Jakubowski, K2RJ, wrote that he was out of town for two weeks wearing his green suit for Uncle Sam. He thanked Associate Editor Don Taylor, KB2BU, for getting the Rag out on time. Al DeBlieck, KW2X, writing for RaRa's VE Team announced the next testing session for December 21st.

This issue also revealed an upcoming new event for RaRa, that being *Home Brew Night.* No Heathkits allowed, but anything you built from a QST article or the like was eligible. Dick Goslee, K2VCZ, was chairman. Tim Wettach, N2TW, wrote with an update of the RaRa program involving teaching of ham classes at St. Joseph's Villa. At this time there was an amateur radio news service called the *North American Teleconference Radio Network* (NTRN), which was broadcasted locally on the K2SA, 146.79 MHz repeater . This month the topic was ACSSB by ARRL QST Editor, Paul Rinaldo, W4RI. With regret it was announced that William Lewis, KA2RYG, became a silent key. From the Want Ads you could buy a Ringo Ranger II from Al Dobbs, KA2OMT.

Local ARRL Awards Checking

By Ed Gable, K2MP
ARRL Award Checker

The ARRL sponsors many different operating awards. The most popular are *Worked All States* (WAS), *DX Century Club* (DXCC) and the *VHF/UHF Century Club* (VUCC). Details on these can be found at the ARRL website, www.arrl.org. A common theme is that each award requires QSL cards to prove that you qualify for these coveted awards. You can now have your QSL cards verified locally to qualify. There is no need to send your precious cards off to ARRL headquarters. Simply contact the ARRL Award checker, Ed Gable, K2MP, at 585.392.3088 or at egable@rochester.rr.com

From the VP of RRRA

By Brad Allen, KB2CHY
Vice-President, RRRA

This season started out very busy and October was no exception. The October meeting was well attended with Max Kessler's presentation on "Blender". Thanks to max for keeping us up on the latest in cool software.

This was also the month that brought us "Pumpkin Patrol". Two nights sitting at selected bridges along the NYS Thruway. There were no incidents, but the great pumpkin and his helpers were making the rounds to the dark places and providing some very good non-fermented cider and Krispy Kreme donuts and donut holes and Apples. I would like to thank RRRA for sponsoring the goodies. This team has been dubbed "The Goodie Patrol". Even the NYS Trooper could not resist a Krispy Kreme Donut. They have a reputation to uphold you know.

The RARA auction was tremendous. I actually believe that Dick and Ed could sell the Brooklyn bridge...twice in the same night if they had to. Too bad they were not the ones auctioning off the Fast Ferry. There were some exceptional buys and a good portion of the late Ray Picken's WA2MYG's estate was sold...every piece of gear I brought was sold. I came in with a large cardboard box filled with equipment and went home with an empty box. Thanks guys for your expertise and to the members for opening their wallets for this gear. I am sure it will be appreciated. See you at RRRA in March. (Hint Hint)

The month of November brought us the RRRA annual tune-up clinic. It was well attended. Bob, N2HJD and his helpers set up to tune and adjust radios to keep members radios in top shape. We also had a short presentation on the festivities for next summer with the Empire State Games coming to the Rochester area. Please be a part of this. RRRA is going to start gearing up for this event. We are the main communication repeater for the games.

RRRA also has some very serious business to pass along. Years have gone by and the club has never seemed to need any type of insurance. The club is in a position where in post 9/11 that we have determined that we need to purchase liability insurance. This can be paid for by donations to RRRA or we may have to come up with a different way. Personally I would like to see this done with donations, auction profits etc. It would be really nice if we could finally hold the Hamfest that we have been trying to put together for the past 4 years.

(RRRA continued on page 4)

(RRRA continued from page 3)

Please renew your membership to RRRA to keep the club strong and self sufficient. Thank You.

December 10th, mark your calendar for the annual RRRA evening out to dinner. This year we return to Mac Gregors Restaurant on Jefferson Rd. by RIT. It's the site of the old Red Creek. We will get there between 6:30 and 7:00PM. We can sit down anytime reasonably after that and we order off the menu, pay your own way. Rules for the evening, no radios at the table, talk about Ham Radio kept to a minimum. This is a family night out. Come with some ideas on how we can entertain ourselves after dinner.

Thanks and have a Happy New Year, Brad KB2CHY

RRRA XMAS FAMILY NIGHT
Mac Gregors Restaurant
Jefferson Rd near RIT
December 10th 7:00PM
Come Join Us

Sidebands – Amateur Radio in the News

By Larry Wallnau, W2ZEY
RARA Media Coordinator

The ***Democrat and Chronicle*** ran a piece on the Pumpkin Patrol and described how ham radio operators were monitoring I-90 overpasses throughout the state. It mentioned how members from RARA were covering the bridges here in Monroe County. According to Keith Freeberg, N2BEL, "We are the eyes and ears of the New York State Police." He went on to note that "If any suspicious activity occurs, we call state police and they respond immediately." Sgt. Charles Stumpf, who is in charge of the program statewide, described instances of rock tossing over bridges and the deaths and injuries that result. There have been no such instances locally on Halloween since the Pumpkin Patrol began. ***Democrat and Chronicle*, November 1, 2005**.

NOTE: William M. Pasternak, WA6ITF, is a regular contributor to the ARRL PR Reflector and works in the media industry. He communicated to me via email that the ***Democrat and Chronicle*** article was picked up by the wire services.

The Poughkeepsie Journal ran a similar story about the Mt. Beacon Amateur Radio Club. Thirty four of its members watched the thruway overpasses in Dutchess County. Like RARA, they operated a net control, and they maintained cell phone contact, if needed, with members of New York State Police Troop T. ***The Poughkeepsie Journal*, November 2, 2005.**

The trade journal ***Fire Chief*** had an editorial on using ham radio to supplement communications during emergencies. Grady McCright noted that the when many departments bought new 800 MHz digital, trunking, and narrow-band FM systems, problems emerged. For example, dead zones existed where none did before. Worse yet, some firefighters began carrying cell phones as a backup source of communication. He argues there already exists a high quality system in every community; namely, a system of reliable 2 meter repeaters. And there are skilled ham radio operators to volunteer their services in emergency communications. ***Fire Chief*, September 2005.**

NOTE: McCright also implied in ***Fire Chief*** that fire department employees could become licensed hams so that they may use the 2 meter repeaters. I see several issues here. If they are doing so while on the time clock then there is a pecuniary interest involved in their use of the ham radio. The employees would have to be off the time clock and volunteering their time as radio communicators. Also, why would McCright prefer to use his own employees on the ham radios? It would be a waste of their training in fire-fighting. Why not use the pool of existing experienced ham radio volunteers for emergency communications?

When the telephones fails, who do you call? On October 11, more that 150,000 customers in Southern California lost telephone and internet service for up to 12 hours. Cellular service was disrupted as well. To make matters worse, there was a widespread disruption of 911 service in parts of Los Angeles and communities on the coast. The Verizon backup system failed too. So the Long Beach ECOC had local hams set up emergency communications. Hams worked along side the police chief and fire chief. Furthermore, they successfully relayed traffic to hospitals, nursing homes, ambulances, and other services. **ARALB News Release.**

And from the November 2005 online issue of ***Contact***, Hams across the country are aiding hurricane kids this holiday season. The ARRL is coming to the aid of children in the coastal areas of Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana this season by conducting a nationwide toy drive. With over 150,000 ARRL members and 670,000 hams in the country overall, it could make quite a difference. Toys are already arriving at the Memphis, TN collection center. Over the past weeks, we have all heard of the devastation left by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Many ham radio operators actually heard

it first hand through volunteer service or on their radios. Thousands of families are without a place to live and will be homeless over the coming Holiday Season. For a child living out of a tent, or car, FEMA trailer or someone else's home, the 2005 holiday season will be anything but jolly. But hams from all across the country are coming to their rescue again through the ARRL program. Between now and December 10, ham radio operators throughout the United States are collecting new toys for children and sending them with a card showing their radio callsign to:

ARRL Toy Drive / Salvation Army
1775 Moriah Woods Blvd - Suite 12
Memphis, TN 38117-7125

A ham documentary is in the works. Richard Lubash, N1VXW, is working on turning the interviews and videotapes he made from the Gulf area into a documentary telling the story of ham radio's response following Katrina in a way that can be shown on TV and cable systems across the country. When released, the ARRL expects to have it duplicated for club public information officers to place in every possible venue they can find for exhibition. If you have videotape of hurricane recovery efforts, please contact Richard at: rlubash@2k-plus.com. ***Contact*, October 2005.**

The accolades continue to pour in following Hurricane Katrina. On PCMag.COM, there was a commentary by John C. Dvorak. He noted "The most overlooked participants in Katrina relief were the ham radio folks. Bush should give them all medals." He pointed out that the hurricane proved the faulty logic in thinking the internet is impossible to kill. Dvorak also suggested that ham radio did not get widespread acknowledgement by the mainstream media because it is a form of traditional communication, rather than edge-of-technology, gee-whiz stuff. Dvorak said that for the most part, ham radio operators are not self promoters. They are unselfish volunteers who pitch in when called upon. ***PCMag.COM*, October 12, 2005.**

And this recent news from ***The ARRL Letter***: "Australia has introduced an entry-level Foundation Amateur Radio license and established a new overall licensing and certification structure. The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) put the new regulations into effect October 19. Other rule changes combined Novice and Novice Limited licensees into a new Standard license class, and all Limited, Intermediate and Unrestricted licensees are now Advanced licensees with full amateur privileges. Wireless Institute of Australia (WIA) President Michael Owen, VK3KI, welcomed the 'long-awaited' changes--in particular the new Foundation license--and expressed the hope that they would encourage newcomers. 'We also know that there will be many amateurs operating on the 40 and 20-meter bands for the first time with those bands available to Standard licensees,' he said. 'We urge all amateurs to make all these newcomers welcome.' Owen also praised ACMA for what he called its 'cooperative approach' in establishing examination standards and procedures. The first Foundation license was issued October 21 to Amanda Gray, who requested the call sign VK4FRST before knowing that hers was, indeed, the first Australian Foundation license issued. ACMA has adopted the distinctive and unusual four-letter suffix starting with 'F' for all VK Foundation licensees. Foundation licensees will have limited access to 80, 40, 15 and 10 meters as well as the entire 2 meter and 70 cm bands using voice modes or 'hand-keyed' CW only (i.e., no keyboard or computer-generated code). Licensees will be permitted to run up to 10 W on SSB and 3 W on AM, FM and CW--although the WIA wants ACMA to increase that limit to 10 W as well. Foundation licensees may only use commercially manufactured transmitters. The new license is similar to the Foundation class license that's been available in Great Britain since 2002." ***The ARRL Letter*, November 4, 2005.**

Morse Code Software Available

By Sigurd Stenersen, LB3KB

I decided to make a contribution to the continued use of Morse code, and have created a computer program that makes it easy to learn the code. The program can be downloaded from http://justlearnmorsecode.com

If you like the program, please make the URL known to the members of your club and anybody else that might be interested.

RaRa Hotline
(585) 442-0587
24 hours a day

RaRa Memorial Scholarship
Application Deadline
April 15, 2006

December Calendar

2 - RaRa Meeting – 7:30 PM - Henrietta Fire Hall, 3129 East Henrietta Road

8 - RaRa Board of Directors – 8:00PM-RIT Bldg-9, Room 3119

9 - RVHFG – 7:30 PM, monthly meeting at Ogden Town Hall, 269 Ogden Center Rd.

13 - RDXA – 7:30 PM, monthly meeting at Gander Mountain, Jay Scutti Blvd, Henrietta

17 - RaRa VE Testing session – 10:00AM Bldg-9 Room-3139 RIT Campus

22 - BARK – 7:00 PM monthly meeting at Bob Rachow, N2WY, 1140 Peck Rd., Hilton

25 - MERRY CHRISTMAS to all.

Where in the world are all the Hams?

Source: Radio Bulgaria

Following an article in eHam.net which raised questions about the worldwide distributions of hams and engendered speculation about the possible reasons for differences in Ham populations across countries, Bob Olsen, KK7WN attempted to shed light on these issues.

He collected some demographic data from various sources including the United Nations, the IARU, and various other professional research organizations. He was able to find relatively complete and comparable information for 36 countries in North America, South America, Europe, Oceania and Asia. Although these countries make up a small portion of all countries, they do contain the "lion's share" of the world's Hams.

He focused on Hams as a percentage of a country's population since it is obvious that more populous countries would be expected to have a larger absolute number of Hams. The average (median) has about one Ham for every 1300 residents. Examples of countries near this average include Sweden, Austria, Australia and the Netherlands.

The high-end "outliers" include Japan (1 per 99) and South Korea (1 per 333). Low-end "outliers" include Russia (1 per 33,000) and China (1 per 17,000, including Taiwan). Averages for countries by region are: North America (1 per 546), South America (1 per 2,800), Oceania (1 per 926), Scandinavia (1 per 819), Northern Europe (1 per 1,500), Southern Europe (1 per 2,100).

Ham percentages appear to be most influenced by a culture's attitude toward "personal electronic gadgetry". For example, holding all else constant, countries that have the greatest relative number of personal PCs and the greatest relative Internet use have the largest number of Hams per inhabitant. Ham percentages also appear to be strongly influenced by language. In particular, country Ham percentages are higher where a significant proportion of a country's population speaks a language that is widespread worldwide. Again this influence is most noticeable in North America, Oceania and Scandinavia (where English is for many the academically required second language).

The very poor penetration of Ham radio in France (1 per 3,200) appears to be a function of a lesser acceptance of electronic gadgetry as well as generally acknowledged lesser use of languages other than French

Gross per capita income does not influence Ham penetration unless it is very low or accompanied by a strong general interest in electronic gadgetry. In fact, where gadgetry interest is low, higher incomes are associated with reduced relative interest in Ham radio.

Ham radio penetration is slightly greater where the population density is less. There is no evidence that this effect is related to the difficulty of antenna placement. It appears to be more related to an overall felt need to "stay connected".

RaRa Amateur Radio License Testing

All Elements needed to complete a license class.

3rd Saturday of each Month, Sept. - May
Registration – 10:00AM
Testing – 10:15AM

Room 3139, Building 9
(Park in Lot J)
Rochester Institute of Technology
1 Lomb Memorial Drive
Rochester, NY 14623

Contact Raj Dewan, N2RD to reserve space. Call 585) 703-4003 or e-mail n2rd@arrl.net

RARA Memorial Scholarship

Application Deadline
April 15, 2006

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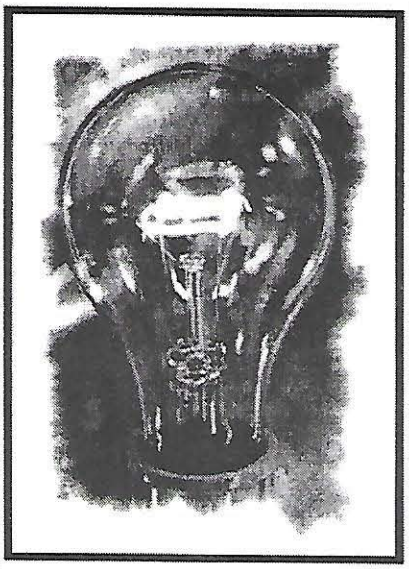
ROCHESTER HAMFEST

June 2-3-4, 2006



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